

CHRISTIAN'S
DAILY
DEVOTION;
WITH
DIRECTIONS

HOW
To Walk with GOD all
the Day long.

BEING
A Continuation of the Pastoral
Letter, from a Minister to
his Parishioners.

By the Author of the Pastoral
Letter.

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Most dearly Beloved Neighbours.

HAVING already presented you with the Pastoral-Letter, wherein I endeavoured to lay before you such Considerations as might, with the Blessing of God, make you sensible of the inestimable Value of your Immortal Souls, and at the same time, convince you of the absolute necessity you lie under, of taking Care for their everlasting Welfare: I thought it farther requisite, to furnish you with some few plain Directions, for your daily Walking with GOD, in the Ways of Holiness and Righteousness, which only lead to eternal Life: And may it please the God of all Grace, to give a Blessing to these my weak Endeavours, that we may receive the End of our Hopes, even the Salvation of all our Souls, through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ, our blessed Lord and Saviour.

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THE
CHRISTIAN'S
DAILY
DEVOTION;
WITH
DIRECTIONS *how to walk with
G O D all the Day long.*

Remember, I beseech you, that the Day is usually spent well or ill, according as you prepare your self in the Beginning of it: If you suffer vain Thoughts to take Possession of your Soul when you awake, you have laid in Fuel for Satan to kindle all the Day after; wherefore, it behoves you at your first waking, to begin with God, to endeavour to possess your Soul with an awful Reverence and Regard to him.

Therefore lift up your Hearts to him, in these or the like pious Ejaculations.

EArly in the Morning will I direct my prayer unto thee and will look up, Psalm 5. 3.

It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing Praises unto thy Name, O most High! To shew forth thy loving kindness in the Morning, and thy Faithfulness every Night, Psalm 92. 1, 2.

He might appoint wearisome Nights for us; so that when we lie down, we should say, When shall we arise, and the Night be gone? And should be full of tossings to and fro, unto the dawning of the Day, Job 7. 3, 4.

He might have scared me with Dreams, and terrified me thro' Visions, Job 7. 14. But blessed be his holy Name! He hath made my sleep sweet unto me, Prov. 3. 24.

When you have thus Offered your first Thoughts to God, put on your Cloaths; and whilst you are so doing, Meditate upon the general Resurrection at the last Day, when we shall all appear before the great Judge of Quick and Dead: Think of the Mercy you have received in having one Day more granted you wherein to work out your Salvation: Let this excite your Thankfulness for former Mercies; and accordingly as soon as you have dressed your self, make your acknowledgments unto Almighty God in a most solemn manner. Morn-

Morning-Prayer.

I Thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, for all thy Mercies bestowed upon me from the time of my Birth to this very Moment: I bless thee for my Creation, Preservation, and all the Blessings of this Life; for my Health, Food, Raiment, Friends, and all other Comforts and Conveniencies; for preserving and watching over me the Night past, and for raising me up in Health and Safety this Morning. But above all, I bless thee for thy wonderful Love in Christ Jesus, for the means of Grace, and for the Hopes of Glory. Lord! Endue me with a thankful Heart, evermore possess'd with a wonderful sense of thy Goodness, and give me Grace to walk worthy of it.

Make me, I beseech thee, always mindful of that solemn Vow and Promise which I entred into at my Baptism; and give me Grace to resist the Temptations of the Devil, the World, and my own corrupt Nature. Give me a due Sense of all my former Transgressions, and work in my Heart an utter abhorrence of them, cause me to walk in thy Fear all the Day long. Make me humble, peaceable, contented: Purifie my Heart from all vain Thoughts and Desires: Keep my Tongue from evil Speaking, Lying and Slandering; my Body in Temperance, Soberness, and Chastity, and in every respect, let my Conversation be as
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becometh the Gospel: Let my Faith be unfeigned, my Love to thee sincere, and give me Grace, entirely to trust and depend upon thy Goodness in every thing. Grant me more & more of the Assistance of thy holy Spirit, to work in me both to will & to do, according to thy good Pleasure. Make me industrious in my Calling, provident of my Time, obedient to my Superiors, just and loving unto all Men. Preserve me from Sin, from evil Company, & from Danger. Bless the Queen, and all the Royal Family, with all the rest of our Governours, whether in Church or State. Bless him particularly, whom thou hast appointed to minister unto me in things pertaining to Salvation; make his Labours effectual for the good of my Soul, and me willing to be guided and directed by him. Bless all my Relations, Father, Mother, Brother, &c. (as you stand related) Reward all my Friends and Benefactors, & forgive all mine Enemies. These things, and whatsoever else thou seest needful, either for my Body or my Soul, be pleas'd in Mercy to bestow upon me, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour, who hath taught me thus to pray, Our Father, &c.

When you have in this manner made known your Request to God, and are thereby entitled to his Blessing, Favour, and Protection the remaining part of the Day; you may, as your occasions require, betake your self to the Works of your
Call-

Calling. And, I beseech you, resolve not to lose or mispend the Day before you, remembering, that when it is gone, you will see it again no more for ever.

But here I must advise you, as ever you hope to have your Prayers beneficial to you, not to behave your self as too many do, who no longer remember what they have been Praying for, and so lose all the Benefit of your Prayers. You must be sure to call to mind the several things you have begg'd of God ; at least, you must be habitually prepared so to do, whenever the Occurrences of the Day shall give you occasion to remember them.

For instance, you have returned your Thanks to God for Mercies already received, take care to walk worthy of them, that he may not be provoked to deny his future Favours. You have begg'd fresh Mercies ; wait in an humble Assurance of God's Fatherly Care over you, and believe, that if you receive them not, he knows that you are not yet prepared for them. As you have prayed for God's holy Spirit, keep your Mind pure, your Thoughts holy, your Body chaste and temperate, that you may be a fit Habitation for the holy Ghost. You desire Strength to resist Temptations, do not give way to them when they come, and be sure not to run into their Embraces.

You desire Forgiveness of past Sins; be careful not to add to your former Accounts, by committing new ones. You beg several Graces, labour to exercise them as God shall call you to it. To prevent speaking evil of your Neighbour, think no evil of him ; and if you hear any, live in hopes that it is a Mistake, a Calumny. You pray for Chastity, be temperate in your Diet, modest in your Apparel, let your Speech be savory, avoid the Conversation of loose or vain Persons. If you would love God, reflect much on his Mercies, especially in Jesus Christ. You desire to depend upon God, let this appear in every Instance of his Providence towards you : Be content with the want of those outward Comforts which he thinks fit to deny you, and do not use any indirect Means in any case to help your self, for that would be to forsake your Maker, and to consult with the Devil. You pray, that you may be loving unto all Men, be ready and willing to shew all acts of Kindness, which shall be offered you. You desire God to forgive your Enemies, do you be sure to offer all reasonable and fitting Terms of Reconciliation, and be willing and desirous to be made Friends again. You pray for your Minister, that God would bless his Labours
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for your Soul's good, be you willing to be guided and directed by him.

Thus, in these and all other Particulars, which you shall have occasion to beg of God, labour to make your Prayers effectual, by ordering your Lives and Conversations according to your Petitions and Wants, and then, doubt not in the least, but God will in a most gracious manner Hear and Answer you, as he knows to be most convenient and suitable to your Condition, and especially to your better and more lasting Interest, that of your Soul, which will never be left unsupplied with such a Measure of the Graces of his holy Spirit, as you are from time to time fitted to receive.

And now, that I may farther direct you in the well ordering of your Life every Day, I beseech you,

1st, To resolve every Day to make it your endeavour to live in the Fear of God, and to obey him, whatever others do. You must expect to meet with many Temptations from wicked Men, from your own Lusts, and from Satan; but you must consider, that these are the very Enemies you have renounced in your Baptism, and that if you do not abhor and forsake them, you will be false to the Covenant of your God, and be found Fighting against him: You

then lifted your self under Christ's Banner, and engaged to Fight his Battles, in opposition to the Kingdom of Darknes; and therefore if you give up your self to do Wickedly, you take part with the Enemies of God, and wretchedly betray the Interest of your Lord and Master.

Wherefore, when thou art tempted to commit Iniquity, consider with thy self, the great Danger thou art in, of losing the Favour of God, and being deprived of the gracious Assistances of his holy Spirit, without which, thou art not able to think, or do any thing that is good. Consider, that every time thou venturest upon Sin, thou rejectest God, and chusest to lose his Friendship and Grace, and to do despite unto him, like the *Jews*, who chose *Barabbas*, the Murderer, and rejected Christ their Saviour. Remember that *God hateth all Workers of Iniquity*, *Psal. 5. 5: 11. 5.* and he counted them his Enemies, *Rom. 8. 7. Psal. 7. 11. James 4. 4, 6.*

Remember the dreadful and irrevocable Damnation of so many Thousands of Angels created to Glory, and that for one Sin. Remember the dismal Effect of *Adam's* Transgression, not only upon himself, but upon all his Children that should be born after him to the World's End.

Remember the Torments & Death our Saviour

Saviour suffered to redeem us from Sin. Consider the great Mercies which God hath vouchsafed to thee ; that he made thee of nothing, according to the likeness of himself, and appointed thee for so noble a Purpose, as to serve him in this Life, and to live and reign with him in Glory hereafter, and that for the present, he hath made all the Creatures thy Subjects and Servants. That when thou hadst made thy self subject to eternal Punishment, God redeemed thee, and delivered his own Son to Death for thy sake.

That he hath called thee to the State of a Christian, and thereby admitted thee to be a Partaker of all the Means of Grace here, and the comfortable Hopes of Glory hereafter.

That he from time to time supplies thee with the Assistance of his holy Spirit.

That he alone preserveth thy Life from all Dangers, and thy Soul from all Temptations. That he hath often knock'd at the Door of thy Conscience, and all to engage thee to forsake Iniquity, to work out thy Salvation, and to be eternally happy.

Lay these things to Heart, I beseech you, and fear not to be accounted scrupulous; or precise, by those that would entice or fright you from your bounden Duty ; but esteem it rather your Glory to be counted

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ed a Fool for Christ, and rejoyce that you are thought worthy to suffer for his Name. Heaven is worth all the Pains of getting thither.

Howsoever the generality of the World may make little account of offending God; tho' the Sinner may be praised in his Lusts, and wicked Men exalted; yet most certain it is, and the holy Spirit of God affirmeth it, *1 John 3. 8. He that committeth Sin is of the Devil, and therefore shall receive his Portion among Devils at the latter Day. The Wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the People that forget God.*

And if you seriously consider these things, as you will avoid Sin, so will you, zly, Arm your self against evil Company, that great Snare of the Devil, which hath ruined a World of Souls. If one be infected with the Plague or Leprosie, you will avoid him as you value your Life or Health: Now there is no such Plague as Wickedness; it destroys Body and Soul too, and is exceeding infectious, so that, if you trust your self with the Company of such Persons, you run into Temptation and a Snare, and 'tis great odds but you will be led Captive thereby. Wherefore, as you tender your own Safety, and dread the Displeasure of Almighty God, avoid the Company of wicked Persons, lest you

you be partaker of their Sins and their Plagues too. And let your Conversation be with those that fear God; these will confirm you in those holy Resolutions you have taken up; these will animate and encourage you to be faithful in them; these will bear you company towards Heaven, and make your Journey comfortable and easie to you.

3ly, Allow your self no time to be idle, but be diligent in your lawfull Calling, and cheerfully depend upon God for his Blessing, and never doubt of it whilst you are thus found in his way.

'Tis commonly observed, that the first Step to Wickedness is Idleness: and indeed there is little hopes of any one being a good Man or a good Christian, who has no care of his time. 'Tis then that the Devil is most busie with us, when we our selves are least employed: So that if there were nothing else in the careless expence of Time, besides the danger of Temptation, a wise and good Man would be sure to take care to be well employed. But it is a Sin too to be idle, for the Prophet Ezekiel, Ch. 16. 49. tells us, that it was one of the Sins of Sodom; and the Author of the Book of Eccl. Ch. 33. 27. observes, that it teaches much Evil. And therefore you must ever account it as an high and crying

crying Offence against Almighty God, who requires that you should improve all your time to good and useful Purposes, who has entrusted you with it as with a Talent, which if you do not improve according to his Intent and Design, to his Glory and the Good of others, he will be sure to require it at your Hands, and bring you to a severe Reckoning for it.

And now, having charged you with the conscientious Observance of these three Particulars, I shall in a more especial manner apply my self unto four sorts of Persons, into whose Hands this little Treatise is likely to fall, *viz.* To the *Youth, Children, Servants, poor People.* And here, I beg of every one of you to consider, the several Circumstances wherein you are placed, and to make it your sincere Endeavours to behave your selves accordingly.

1st. To the *Youth*: Those of your Age are too apt to indulge themselves in a neglect of God, and the Concerns of their everlasting Salvation. Ask your own Heart whether you do not flatter your self, that you will Repent, and be good hereafter, when this or that desire or Lust is satisfied, such or such a Pleasure enjoyed? And have you not so gone on from Day to Day, and that perhaps for a long time? Oh! Consider, if this be your Case, it is a very

very bad and a dangerous one, and if not speedily amended, is likely to end in great Sorrow and Bitterness ; this is a State of Disobediencce and Enmity against God, whereby you are become the subject of his Wrath, Anger, and Displeasure ; and what wise Man would continue one Minute in such Circumstances ? Who would run so great a hazard of his Soul, which is more worth than Ten Thousand Worlds ? For it is God's infinite Mercy that you are not consumed. But, consider farther, you have a great deal of Business to do, even to work out your Salvation, and that must be done *by patient Continuance in well-doing*. God sent you into the World to serve him, and gives you every Day of your Life for that Purpose : How foolish then is it for you to play away that Candle which was allotted you to work by, and then to think of beginning, when great part of your Time is spent and gone ?

Besides, the present is the only Time, and the longer you defer, the more listless and unfit you will be ; when you have accustomed your self to Evil, it will grow familiar to you, and you will be as uneasy to part with it, as Men usually are with an old Acquaintance, in whose Company they have long delighted : Nay, the Prophet Jeremy, Ch. 13. 23. says, *It is as easie for the Ethiopian*

Ethiopian to change his Skin, or the Leopard his Spots, as it is for those to do well, who are accustomed to do evil ; that is, it is next to an Impossibility.

But what if God should in his just Judgment withdraw his Grace from you? What if he should take the Forfeiture, and Seal your Condemnation? Consider it! you have provoked him to do it ; he may justly do it, and what Security have you, that he will not do it? The Advice he gives every one of us is, *To Day if ye will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts. This is the accepted Time, this is the Day of Salvation:* And if we let this Day slip, we have Reason to fear the Approach of that Night, wherein no Man can Work, when the Things belonging to our Peace, will be hidden from our Eyes. Surely it is a most dreadful thing to be forsaken by God, and given over to our own Hearts Lusts, to walk in our own Counsels.

Wherefore, Young Man ! *Remember thy Creator in the Days of thy Youth*, and do not make Provision for Shame and Sorrow in thy elder Years : Think not that God will be put off with the Dregs and Refuse of thy Days : Offer it unto thy Governour, would he accept it? No certainly, he would despise Thee and thy Offering ; so will God too. Keep Innocency while young

young, and it will yield thee unspeakable Comfort all thy Life long ; and thou wilt lay up a good Foundation also against the time to come. Behold, Life and Death are set before thee ; If thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments, early employ thy self in so doing.

Again, your Age is too too subject to the Love of sensual Pleasures : Let me beseech you to have an especial guard over all your Senses, and avoid all Provocations and Temptations to Lust and Wantonness ; such are the Company of unclean Persons, unsavoury Discourses, lascivious Pictures, Books and Songs, Intemperance in Meat and Drink, &c. all which will be apt to add Fuel to your Lusts. Allow not in your self any unchaste Thoughts, Words, or Actions ; but be serious and sober-minded, humble, modest, pure ; Remember, that no unclean Person shall enter into the Kingdom of God.

2dly, To *Children*. Do you be sure to make a Conscience of loving and honouring your Parents ; and remember that the Command that enjoyns it, is the first Commandment with Promise, and that a grievous Curse is annexed to the Violaters of it : *The Eye that mocketh his Father, and despiseth to obey his Mother, the Ravens of the Valley shall pick it out, and the young Eagles shall*

shall eat it, Prov. 30. 17. that is, such a disobedient Child shall die an unnatural, untimely, and ignominious Death; and the too many wretched Examples of publick Justice are sad Instances of this Truth.

3dly, *To Servants.* Let me beseech you in the Words of the Apostle, Eph. 6. 5, &c. *Be obedient unto them that are your Masters according to the Flesh, with fear & trembling, in singleness of Heart, as unto Christ; not with Eye-service, as Men-pleasers, but as the Servants of Christ, doing the Will of God from the Heart. With good will, doing Service as to the Lord, and not to Men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any Man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.* Again, 1 Pet. 2. 18. *Servants be subject to your Masters with all Fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is Thank-worthy, if a Man, for Conscience towards God, endure Grief, suffering wrongfully: For what Glory is it, if when ye be buffeted for your Faults, ye shall take it patiently? But if when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable unto God, for even hereunto were ye called, &c.*

4ly, *To the Poor.* The Providence of Almighty God has placed you under difficult Circumstances of Life, and Daily reads you a Lesson in a more particular manner to depend upon him. This you may

may be assured of for your Comfort, that you are under God's constant and immediate Care: And one Advantage you enjoy above the Rich in your Journey to Heaven is, that you are not clog'd & hindered in your Course thither, by those manifold Encumbrances which lie on them; of whom our Saviour hath said, *That it is very hard for them to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Mat. 19. 24. Their Temptations are proportion'd to their Abundance; their Cares are more, and their Distractions greater; so that you have no Reason to envy them, nor repine at your own Condition; and these are chiefly your Temptations, and against these you must be more particularly watchful. Certainly, if you consider things aright, you will find that your Store-house is the most sure, your Supply most certain; for you are immediately in the Hands of God, of him who feedeth the Ravens, and cloatheth the Grass of the Field; so that you may be much more assured that he will cloath you.

What God requires of you, is, That you be diligent and painful, frugal and provident; that you carefully avoid those Sins which your Poverty may tempt you to; as Falshood and Deceit, Murmuring and Repining; that you serve God with a
quiet

quiet Mind, and live in constant Hopes and Expectation of the Heavenly Treasure ; that you endeavour to be Humble, Holy, Heavenly-minded, always remembering, that he is the poorest Man, who is poor in Grace: Your Saviour had not where to lay his Head ; let his Example serve to reconcile your low Condition to you ; and let your religious Behaviour under it, be the Means to sanctifie it.

And now let me advise every one of you how to behave your selves in the Evening of every Day. And here I beseech you, call your selves every Night to a strict Account for the Actions of the past Day : Ask your selves what you have been doing ? What Company you have kept ? What Temptations you have met with ? What Sins you have committed ? What Corruptions you have subdu'd ? What Experiences you had of God's Goodness, and how you entertain'd them ? What use you have made of his Dealing with your self or others ? In a Word, What Progress you have made Heaven-wards ? And evermore account that Day lost, wherein you have not done, or received some Good. Humble your self before God, for every neglect of your Duty in the Day past, and be sure to express your Thankfulness to him for every Opportunity you have met

met with, of doing or receiving Good.

Thus, if you daily sum up your Estate with God, you need not be afraid of a long and uncertain Reckoning, you will constantly see what you have to expect and answer for, and may prepare your self accordingly.

And when you have so done, you may with much Comfort and Assurance address your self unto Almighty God, in these, or the like Words.

Evening-Prayer.

IN an humble Acknowledgment of my manifold Sins & Iniquities, which I from time to time, & more especially this Day, have committed against thee, both in Thought, Word, & Deed; I now prostrate my self before thee, O Lord of Heaven & Earth, beseeching thee, for the sake of Jesus Christ, my only Lord and Saviour, to be merciful unto me, and forgive me. Humble me, O Lord, that I have not rendered unto thee according to thy Mercy and loving Kindness; that I have been forgetful & disobedient, and have sinned against Heaven, and in thy Sight. Let thy holy Spirit sanctifie me throughout, and give me more and more Grace and Strength, whereby I may be enabled to subdue all my sinful and corrupt Affections; and grant that I may approve the remainder of
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my Days with all possible Care, and give all diligence to make my Calling and Election sure, that I may persevere therein unto Death, that at last I may attain everlasting Life, enable me by Faith to embrace the Promises, and obey the Precepts of the Gospel. Let thy Word be my Rule and Counsellor. Settle in my Soul a constant Desire, and Endeavour to Fear, Serve, and Remember thee. Give me a gracious Heart, and a good Understanding to keep thy Commandments at all times. Prepare me for every Condition thou hast designed me; and let every Instance of thy Providence engage me to cleave more steadfastly unto thee, and to glorifie thy great Name; and in all things, let me still look up unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of my Faith. Make me more and more sensible of the Vanity, the Shortness and Uncertainty of this Life, and of the Eternity of the next. Let my great Concern here, be for the Glory of thee my God, and the Interest of my precious and immortal Soul. And let my Thoughts be much employed on that Day when God shall judge the Secrets of Men by Jesus Christ. Suffer me not in a short Life, to make way for eternal Misery; but let me make it my constant Business to prepare my self to be happy for ever with thee.

Enlarge and Bless thy holy Catholick Church with more abundant Peace, Purity, and Concord. Pardon the crying Sins of the Nation wherein I live. Give us Grace to search and try

try our Ways, & turn unto thee our God. Make
 us a People peculiar to thy self, zealous of good
 Works. Bless the Queen, and all that are in Au-
 thority under her : Bless the Ministers of thy
 holy Word and Sacraments, my Parents, Bro-
 thers, Sisters, Master, Fellow-Servants, &c.
 (as you stand related) Reward all my Friends
 and Benefactors, and forgive all mine Ene-
 mies. Be merciful to all afflicted Persons, sancti-
 fie their Afflictions unto them, give them Pati-
 ence under them, & an happy Issue out of them.

Accept my Praises & Thanksgivings for all
 thy Mercies vouchsafed me in this Life, & for
 the Hopes of a better. And now that I am going
 to take my Rest & Sleep ; let me consider, that
 thou Lord only makest me dwell in Safety ;
 Whether I Sleep or Wake, Live or Die, let me
 be found thine own, to thy eternal Glory, and
 my everlasting Salvation, thro' Jesus Christ ;
 in whose blessed Name & Words, I sum up my
 imperfect Prayers, saying, Our Father, &c.

Thus having waited upon God by so-
 lemn Prayer, and committed your self to
 his Protection, go to rest with an holy
 Confidence of it, and with a serious Me-
 ditation of your last Hour : Let the Night
 put you in mind of the many Days of
 Darkness ; let your Bed make you mindful
 of your Grave, and your Sleep of your
 Death, and so compose your Soul, as if
 you expected not to awake till the Morn-
 ing of the Resurrection.

Note,

Note, It is very requisite to Read a Psalm, and a Chapter out of the Old or New Testament every Morning and Evening, either before or after Prayer, as best suits with your Devotion and Leisure.

Grace before Meat.

Bless, O Lord, theset hy Creatures to our Use, and us in the use of them, to thy Service, through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Grace after Meat.

Blessed be thy Name, O Lord, for all thy Mercies, and for this present Refreshment: Grant that in the Strength thereof, we may live to set forth thy Honour and Glory, through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



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